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Bedouins MJ4

proposes to wage war on So-and-So, and on such and such a date. 622
This would not be tolerated. He must carry the public opinion of the tribe with him. Hence, before anything is undertaken, secret meetings and daily talks are held with the tribal greybeards and men of experience. Once a decision has been come to, however, and the battle joined, the leadership lies with the shaikh, and his orders must be obeyed.

To maintain his influence in the piping times of peace, the shaikh must prove himself literally the "father of his people". He must [592] know the family troubles of every man and must give good and fair decisions when cases are brought to him for settlement. Above all, he must not be miserly, and must keep open house. No name has a [574] more unworthy meaning, or leaves a nastier taste in the mouth of the Badawin than the epithet *bakhil*, or "stingy one". Once this name *bakhil* sticks to a chief, his influence is at an end. Hence a successful shaikh must always have coffee going in his tent, pestle must ring on mortar from morn to night. Even this is not enough; for his hungry tribesmen, the majority of whom would scarcely taste meat from year's end to year's end, expect from their shaikh an occasional feast and the slaying of a camel, that all may eat their fill. The shaikh can reasonably stage a feast on the arrival of an important guest, to celebrate a wedding, or circumcision ceremony, or the like.

A great shaikh will go even further and will regularly send presents 622
of frocks and material for dresses to the wives of the less fortunate 431
members of his tribe. This keeps the women happy, and indirectly their husbands also. The shaikh's chief lady also has herself a lot to do in keeping up her husband's prestige, and the wives of the junior members of the clan are for ever calling on her and explaining their difficulties, in the unexpressed hope that assistance to the wardrobe or kitchen will be forthcoming. The great Faisal al Duwish was a master at keeping the women of the tribe happy, and it paid: the same must also be said of His Majesty King 'Abdul 'Aziz ibn Sa'ud.

HARD LIFE OF THE INDIVIDUAL BADAWIN

The average Badawin has a hard and difficult existence, and may 511
be said to be always hungry and ill-clad. The main hardship he is at all times faced with is lack of money and inability to make any, by